

AN OPEN LETTER

—TO—

✓ B. H. ROBERTS, ✓
SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH.

Mr. B. H. Roberts,

Dear Sir—I have read your book on "Secession in The Presidency of The Church," and I have read it carefully, and find that you are a good reasoner and logician when you have sound premises to reason from; but unfortunately you are not always in possession of such premises, and therefore, while your reasoning faculties are good, many of your conclusions are simply faulty and false. I say so with no ill-feeling to you or to any. I have written, lately, a little work on this question, myself, but have not yet got it into print, and I find that what you have said in relation to young Joseph's false claims to the prophetic office, and what I have said, myself, on that matter, run very nearly together; and I feel that any man who reflects at all upon those claims, must come to similar conclusions.

Young Joseph Smith's claims are simply false, and no amount of effort can make them true; and nothing but the merest ignorance or effrontery, with a determination to succeed at any cost, could ever prompt any man who looks the written facts squarely in the face, to stand up in its defence. These Reorganized gentlemen are not ignorant of the weakness of their position. Their bread and butter, however, are at stake, and feeling that they have a good thing, on the surface, though false and rotten underneath, they do not at all feel like giving it up, or acknowledging their errors. But I often think it strange that Brighamites, men who are so

confident of having the truth on their side, should utterly refuse to take up the gauntlet thrown down by these same Josephites, especially as they are commanded to "call upon their enemies to meet them both in private and in public," and to invite them to bring forth their strong reasons against the Lord and His work, and are promised that in as much as they are faithful, the folly of their enemies shall be made manifest. I can't imagine how that utter refusal can be justifiable on Brigham's part, or on the part of anyone claiming the right to lead a people such as the Latter Day Saints, especially where so much self-evident folly crops out on the part of the enemy as is found in support of the claims of young Joseph to succeed his father in the prophetic office. A consciousness of the weakness of the position assumed both by Brigham and his successors, can alone account for it.

But I propose now, to point out a few things which concern Brigham's history and claims, which I am not able to find any reference made to in your book on "Secession in the Presidency of the Church."

"He that is ordained of me (to fill the President's office) shall come in at the gate, and be ordained as I have told you before."

You perceive that this language refers to the highest officer in the church, and can refer to no other officer. And now, what did God tell us "before" in relation to the ordination of that officer? "I have sent unto you (Joseph) Peter, James and John (angels) by whom I have or-

dained you." (Doc. & Cov. Ser. 27:12, Salt Lake ed.)

Is this what God said "before" to Joseph touching this matter? Can you find anything else that God said before, as to how and by whom this officer is ordained? If you can you can do more than any other man I have ever heard of. You perceive, then, that this officer or successor in the prophetic office, is to be ORDAINED to that office as I (God) have told you before. He told us "before" that angels, who in their lifetime were ordained to be prophets, seers, revelators and translators, were sent unto Joseph to ordain him to that same office, and Oliver to a secondary office in the holy priesthood. And on the principle that none can give or confer upon another that which was never conferred upon himself, as a matter of course, the successor to Joseph must receive an ordination under like hands to those who ordained the predecessor. How else can the words, "as I have told you before" have any reasonable meaning?

But looking at Brigham Young, I find that he was never ordained only to the office of the President of the Twelve Apostles in the days of Joseph, and NEVER CLAIMED ANY OTHER ORINATION.

The death of a prophet adds nothing to any man's authority. It simply leaves all men's ordination in the church as it found them, precisely. And this being the case, Brigham Young stood, at the death of Joseph, precisely where he was before that event. Brigham nor any one of his quorum, nor any one else, has ever claimed for him any higher ordination than to the presidency of the Twelve Apostles. Now, a priest (Aaronic) cannot get into the office of an Elder without an ordination to

that office; an Elder cannot step into the office of High Priest without an ordination under the hands of some one who at least holds that office. A High Priest cannot get into the office or quorum of the Twelve Apostles without an ordination to that office, under the hands of some person or persons who, at least hold that authority. Upon the same principle, one of the Twelve Apostles could never get into the office of Assistant President or Counsellor to the First President over the whole church, without an ordination to that office, under the hands of THE PRESIDENT OVER THE WHOLE CHURCH; and as a matter of course, were one of the assistant presidents, or counsellors to the First President called to fill the office of the President of the whole church, he could not step into THAT office without an ordination to it, any more than Joseph the prophet could, or Moses could, or Jesus could, or Peter, James and John could, or any other man who ever held that office. The keys of mysteries and revelations, and the right to stand in the presence of God and talk with Him face to face, are always conferred upon, and possessed by, this officer.—(Doc. & Cov. Sec. 8:2.)

Now, we need not ask how Brigham Young came to possess these keys and glorious privileges, because he never possessed them; but the question is here and now, how did or could Brigham lawfully step, not only over the office of Assistant President which office was next above him, BUT INTO THE OFFICE NEXT ABOVE THAT AGAIN, WHICH IS THE GREATEST OF ALL, WITHOUT AN ORINATION TO EITHER OF THEM?

My friend Roberts, here is a grand point, which, without a single one more, ought to open the eyes of every

thinking man and woman, not only in Utah but in all the earth, to the monstrosity of Brigham Young's usurpation! You should know that no man can get the inspiring gifts of any office in the whole priesthood, unless he is ordained to it, and lawfully ordained to it at that, by his superiors in office.

"The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me," said Jesus, "BECAUSE HE hath ANOINTED ME to preach glad tidings unto the meek." &c. And surely if the Spirit that guided the great Masterbuilder, Christ, was not obtained ONLY BY ORIENTATION under the hands of the Almighty, it is in vain for others to claim the glorious gifts without such ordination. (Luke 4: 18.) "He whom they refused, saying, 'who made thee a ruler and a judge;' the same (Moses) did God send to be a RULER and a DELIVERER, by the HAND OF THE ANGEL who appeared to him in the Bush."—(Acts 7: 35.)

"The Law given unto Moses, who was ordained BY THE HANDS OF ANGELS, to be the mediator of this first covenant, the law."—(Gal. 3: 19, inspired.)

"And unto you three (Peter, James and John) will I (Jesus) give this power and the Keys of this ministry until I come."—*Doc. & Cov.* April 1829.)

The Keys to what ministry? The Keys of that same ministry which they bestowed upon Joseph by the laying on of their hands. "Upon you three," &c. Then Jesus did not bestow the Keys of this ministry upon all of the twelve in his day? Indeed he did not. Besides, his language is in the future tense; "I will give," &c., showing that the keys which they conferred upon Joseph Smith had not YET been conferred upon them. Peter, it seems, was the first ordained to this power and min-

istry; James succeeded him, and John followed. It was necessary, therefore, that these personages, being clothed with the holy priesthood after the order of the Son of God, should be sent to confer that office upon Joseph to enable him to build according to the pattern, and to organize his church upon its ancient foundation and order. How else could Joseph Smith come into possession of the keys, gifts and power of that office? I mention the ordination of Moses and that of Jesus, Peter, James and John, to the prophetic office, as well as that of Joseph Smith, merely to show the necessity of all who hold it or ever did hold it, being ordained to it. And as all these were ordained to this office by the hands of heavenly messengers, who themselves held it, and obtained it in the same way IN THEIR DAY AND GENERATION, so all must come into possession of it. As this office is the highest and the greatest known to man, or that can be conferred upon man, there being no greater, and as none but one can hold it at the same time on the earth, there is an absolute necessity that as often as one holding this priesthood is to be succeeded by another, he must come into possession of it as all the rest have. There is no need nor place for a successor to this office as long as the predecessor is living, or remains a prophet on the earth, and if Joseph Smith should have ordained his successor five minutes before he was slain, or "taken," it would be a violation of the oath of God, who said: "and this ye shall know ASSUREDLY, that there is none other appointed unto you to receive commandments and revelations UNTIL HE BE TAKEN, if he abide in me." A parallel case to this is seen in the case of Elisha and Elijah. The former asked the

latter for a double portion of the prophetic gift and power, and that was simply that he might be endowed with the prophetic gifts of Elijah. Elijah answered that he had asked "a hard thing," nevertheless if thou see me when I am "TAKEN" it shall be so unto thee, but if not it shall not be so. No room, you see, for another like Elijah until he was taken; but when Elijah was taken up from the earth into the chariot of God, he could then act as an angel of light and no doubt the prophetic office was then conferred as in the other cases, by the laying on of hands; for the prophetic gifts are not given only by the laying on of hands of those who possess them.

I am aware that Mr. Woodruff has claimed that the Twelve received from Joseph a short time before his death, an endowment of ALL the prophetic gifts and keys which he himself possessed in his prophetic ministry. There is not one word of truth in this statement, either in theory or in fact. It is totally at war with all that God has revealed in the present or past dispensations, first of all. God never in any age of the world, conferred the prophetic gifts upon any more than one at the same time. God promised only to plant another in Joseph's stead, not ten or a dozen. Besides, there is the promise of God, that no one would be appointed to receive commandments and revelations for the church during his ministry as a prophet, simply, as before observed, because there was neither place nor use for any such person, and never was, until he was taken.

The following quotations from the Doc. & Cov., show that but one was promised to succeed Joseph, and all history, reason, revelation and common sense, give the lie to the claim

of any more.

"I have given unto him the keys of the mysteries and revelations which are sealed until I shall appoint unto them (the church) ANOTHER in his stead." Not ten or a dozen.

"I have given unto him (Joseph) the keys of the mystery of those things which are sealed, even things which were from the foundation of the world, and the things which shall come from this time until the time of my coming, if he abide in me, and if not, ANOTHER," not ten or a dozen, "will I plant in his stead."

"He shall not have power except to appoint ANOTHER in his stead."

"Nevertheless through you (Joseph) shall the oracles (the sealed mysteries and revelations) be given to ANOTHER, even unto the church." Here are four testimonies taken from as many revelations given at different times, to assure the Saints that God would appoint ANOTHER in the stead of Joseph, to lead the church in his stead as Joseph led it, but no more.

But the claim of Mr. Willford Woodruff is lame in other great points as well as this. You know that God made it a law to the church that its president is appointed by revelation and that that revelation is to come from God THROUGH JOSEPH, as "The President of the church, who is also the president of the council, IS APPOINTED BY REVELATION (Doc. & Cov. Sec. 102:9)

"But VERILY, VERILY I say unto you, that none else shall be appointed unto THIS OFFICE," (that is, the gift of receiving commandments and revelations for the Church), "except it be TAKEN HIM,"—Joseph. "And this shall be a law unto you," &c., "that ye be not deceived" and that ye may know that the revelations of all others but his, who is so appointed of God, through Joseph, are false

and will lead to destruction sooner or later. For all things in God's Kingdom "are governed by law," and that being true, it must of necessity be, that the call, appointment and ordination of a prophet is fixed and accomplished by Law, and the above is the law, and Brigham Young never pretended that he was called in any such way. Nor has any living or dead man ever claimed to be so appointed but Mr. Strang. They could not claim such an appointment, because they never received it to claim. The Brighamite leaders never claimed any ordination than that of the Twelve Apostles. And as their calling and mission is solely and wholly to the nations of the earth, UNDER THE DIRECTION OF THE CHURCH SUPREMACY, and not to the church, we must conclude that the God of Israel, who has made so many promises that He would "plant" and "appoint another" in Joseph's stead, has fulfilled His word, not only that these men might be regularly sent on their missions, but that the work of Joseph as a prophet, seer, revelator and translator, might go on. And these men, in attempting to get out of their own offices and into an office far superior to theirs, without any legal call or appointment to it, to say nothing of an ordination to it, instead of quietly going on their missions to the nations, merely make themselves deceivers of the people, and their revelations the work of the wicked one.

Talk about Joseph endowing the Twelve with every key and every gift that he possessed himself. Why, if that were possible, it would make the whole Twelve, prophets, seers, revelators and translators, just as he was himself!! And he did all this?—made all these men just such as he was himself, and without an ordina-

tion, and without he had been taken himself?!! That may do very well to amuse little children with, but no man having any knowledge of the order of God's house, can ever set that down as a truth. Supposing we admit all this, what evidence is there to show that they possessed ANY ONE of the prophetic gifts of Joseph, the Seer, since they laid claim to all this? Absolutely none, and it is positively surprising that they could have the hardihood to lay claim to any such gifts as Joseph Smith possessed, knowing, as many do, and all should, that no such gifts have ever been possessed by them.

Who ever heard of any of them handling the Urim and Thummim, or the ancient records and oracles which this instrument is designed to translate? Is the Book of Mormon to be believed when it testifies that both this instrument and the ancient records are to be handed down from generation to generation, or from ONE PROPHECY TO ANOTHER? Has the Almighty altered this saying at any time in the past?

Is not the successor of any office, the world over, entitled to the same privileges; the SAME KNOWLEDGE; the SAME POWERS, PRIVILEGES AND AUTHORITY possessed by the predecessor? And is it not as universal a fact that all successors in any office, must be appointed ACCORDING TO THE SAME LAW, and BY THE SAME POWER, that appointed the predecessor? If God appoints and constitutes one prophet to-day by one law, and another to succeed him to-morrow by another law, and another regulation, and after a while appoints another successor in the same office by still another law and power, and so keeps on at it, never appointing and constituting any two prophets to stand at the head alike, thus keeping His

Saints in an eternal puzzle and hide-and-go seek to find the truth, I can't conceive of any one who has taken more pains than He to deceive his people, though He has said, "take heed that no man deceive you." But God forbid that this is the order of things that He asks mankind to bow to. The fault is with man, the blind leaders of the blind; the corrupt and the crafty, and not with the Almighty.

Remembering that God (as before said) promised to place another in Joseph's stead, some four different times; and as it is claimed for the Twelve that they were endowed with all the keys and gifts held by Joseph, the prophet, will you tell us how it happened that Brigham Young so soon after Joseph's death, so grossly contradicted the Almighty by saying: "LET NO MAN PRESUME, FOR A MOMENT, THAT JOSEPH'S PLACE WILL BE FILLED BY ANOTHER. For remember that he stands in his own place, and always will, and the Twelve stand in their own place and always will." Is this the kind of evidence you have to offer, that Brigham and his quorum were endowed with all the keys and gifts held by Joseph, the prophet?

If God changed from the promises above made, what was it that caused that change? And if He did not, which, of course, is true, then by what authority, or keys or inspiration, did Brigham put forth that most emphatic decree? Joseph's "place" was at the head of the church or **CATHEDRA**, as its leader. That was the place that God at four different times, said He would appoint and ordain one to fill. That was the place, or the "stand referred to by the Almighty." God said He would fill it. Brigham Young stands up in a public congregation and proclaims

to all the Saints in all the world: "Let no man presume, for a moment, that Joseph's place will be filled by another," &c., thus contradicting the Almighty; telling them, also, that Joseph still stood in his own place, when he was cut down and no longer occupied his place at the head of the church on earth. Moreover, he says: "And the Twelve stand in their own place and ALWAYS WILL;" which in a short time afterward turns out to be false also. For they soon got out of their places after Joseph's death, teaching and assuming that the Twelve were the proper persons to lead the church, utterly independent of any one else. But through the force of arguments hurled against them by Mr. Strang, they again change front, and turn and cast Brigham Young to stand in Joseph's "place" and two others out of his quorum to be his counsellors, and then ordained three others to fill their vacant places in said quorum. And all this in the face of that other saying of Brigham, sent into all the world: "Brethren, you are now WITHOUT A PROPHET PRESENT WITH YOU IN THE PLACE TO GUIDE YOU, but you are not without apostles," &c.

And yet, after all this, his followers undertake to prove him a prophet, "like unto Moses, having all the gifts which God bestows upon the head of the church!" or all the gifts and keys which God conferred upon the prophet Joseph, who who was a prophet like unto Moses!!!

And now I feel very much like testing Brigham Young in the claim set up for him as a successor of the prophet, Joseph Smith, a little further.

You may remember that it is said that—"The duty of the President of the office of the High priesthood is to preside over the whole church, and

he like unto Moses. Behold, here is wisdom! you to be a seer, a revelator, a translator and a prophet, having all the gifts of God which He bestows upon the head of the church." (Doc. & Cov. Sec. 107: 91, 92.)

When he gave the lie to the above promises of God, was that an evidence that he was a prophet, and a seer of God like unto Moses? As the Book of Mormon says that the being put in possession of the Urim and Thummim, by the power of God, is what constitutes a seer. What evidence can you or any one else bring from the testimony of Brigham Young that he ever was a seer after this pattern? And it being written in the Book of Mormon that, the records had and kept among the Nephites were designed to be handed down from one prophet to another, &c. (See 1st Book of Nephi, Chap. 5: 47, also Book of Mosiah, Chap. 13: 3,) and it being claimed by you and others that Brigham Young was Joseph's lawful successor, in the Presidency and prophetic office, what evidence have you to offer to any honest inquirer, that he either ever handled or saw either these records or the instrument designed for their translation? Who are his witnesses in these matters?

I know as well as I wish to know, that Joseph Smith held these records and translated from them by this instrument. I am just as well satisfied that Mr. Strang did possess these things, and did translate from and by them as Joseph did. I have never seen either of these men translate and have only their own and their witnesses' testimony for it. Why should I believe Brigham Young or any of his successors to be seers, when neither he nor they, nor anybody else ever testified that he was a seer of this kind? Why should I believe Young Joseph a seer, when

neither he nor any one else, as a witness, has ever testified to his being anything of the kind? Did you ever inquire into the merits of the works of Mr. Strang, so as to satisfy yourself that you do not falsely accuse him of being an impostor? Or did you do with him precisely as the enemies of Joseph have done with him, condemn him solely upon the testimony of his meanest and basest enemies? You know that Joseph's enemies believed that he lied for breakfast and dinner and supper, and between meals; when he lay down and when he arose; when he labored and when he rested; that his whole life was one living lie, for the sake of a little paltry gain. And you must have an idea that as Joseph Smith's enemies did to him, so did the enemies of all the prophets to them. What of it, you say? Nothing, only it would seem that those who were once believers in Joseph Smith have changed places with them, and now do the same thing with his successor.

I do not forget another plea set up by you and others in behalf of Brigham Young, and the right of his quorum to lead the church: namely, that the quorum of the Twelve are co-equal in power and decision with the First Presidency of the church. A graver mistake could not be made by any man or set of men.

All officers in the church of like priesthood, are organized into quorums, each quorum being entitled to a president and two counselors, appointed out of their own quorum. The High Priests are entitled to such a president and counselors. (See page 445, Doc. & Cov. par. 133 to 136; also page 385; par. 21 to 23.)

Now, it is said in par. 24, that the Twelve Apostles form a quorum "equal in authority and power to the three presidents previously mentioned."

The question arises here: are these three presidents the quorum of the First Presidency of the church, who preside over the whole Priesthood, and over the whole church, or are they the presidents of the High Priests' quorum? The latter are doubtless the quorum intended. To say that this quorum is the quorum of the ruler Presidency of the church is virtually to say that there was, in the days of Joseph, no supreme, controlling or governing power in the church; for it is said in the connection, that several other quorums were equal in authority and power with this quorum, and with each other. But in the lifetime of Joseph the Twelve were subject, and amenable to, and sent on their missions by, the First Presidency of the church; and all this shows the superiority of the First Presidency, not only over the Twelve, but over all the church.

To say that all the above mentioned quorums were equal in power and authority with the First Presidency is simply to say that any one of them might do as they pleased, and there was no one to call them in question or set them in order. But we are assured by revelation, (page 301, Doc. & Cov. 7s par. to 80,) that the First President and his counselors are the HIGHEST council in the church of God, and that their decisions are the end of controversy in all spiritual matters brought before it. That is not said anywhere of the decisions of the Twelve, nor of any other quorum in the church, for they all can be called in question and appealed from, in their decisions, except the decisions of this quorum.

Moreover, the Twelve, at the death of Joseph Smith, had nothing to do with the regulating of the affairs of the church at Nauvoo, or any other one of the stakes of Zion. They are

everywhere spoken of as a traveling, presiding high council, officiating in the name of the Lord under the direction of the First Presidency, whose duty and mission is, abroad among the nations of the earth, opening up the gospel to the inhabitants thereof. Yet, as soon as Joseph and Hyrum were taken, they assumed the reins of government and authority, over the whole church, and not only undertake to cut off Sidney Rigdon, a man over whom they had no authority, but undertake to cut off Mr. Strang, also, who held the written appointment by revelation through Joseph, as his lawful successor, without so much as giving him a hearing, which every accused man, both in and out of the church, is entitled to, and should have!

Now, you have spoken somewhat against Mr. Strang's appointment, and claims of angelic ordination, but for the sake of consistency, to put some kind of a decent face, if possible, upon Brigham Young's career and claims to succeed the prophet, Joseph; and until you can accomplish this, be silent about the claims of Mr. Strang or anybody else.

It is true that Mr. Strang was ordained a King, and a great deal of ado has been made about it by some Mormons.

You may never have heard of it, but it is just as true that Joseph Smith was ordained to the Kingly office. Both William Marks and George Miller have put it on record that Joseph Smith, some time before his martyrdom, was also ordained a King. Any one who has a copy of Chas. P. Thompson's old "HANNIBAL AND OMAHA," and Gen. George Miller's correspondence with the "NORTHERN ISLANDER," in the early fifties, can very clearly read that fact for himself.

William Marks, you know, who was then Chas. B. Thompson's "Chief Teacher in Jehovah's Presbytery, of Zion," and who, in 1860, ordained young Joseph Smith to be his father's successor in the prophetic office, at Amboy, Ill., and who was associated with the said Chas. B. Thompson for some seven years before, has taken great pains to inform us of the Kingly ordination of Joseph Smith, as well as that plural marriage was introduced, and practiced in Nauvoo, about the same time.

You say, perhaps, what of all this? Nothing, except merely this: that both Joseph and James, were very much alike in these matters, as well as in all other things. So that if the one is condemned for these things the other is also. And if the one is blameless and blessed, the other is. For my own part, I cannot see any more wrong in being anointed a King than in being anointed a Bishop or a High Priest. They are all officers belonging to the Holy Priesthood.

Whatever argument or train of thought conspires to overthrow James, will also overthrow Joseph; for what the predecessor is the successor is and must be also. It is true that the successor of Joseph would not need to commence and reveal anew precisely the same things that Joseph did, but he would begin where Joseph left off and continue to reveal the same things which Joseph would have revealed had he been permitted to continue as a prophet of God to his people. That is precisely the direction in which Mr. Strang followed. Joseph Smith and all the other prophets, have informed us, that the Latter Day dispensation is to be made up of all the dispensations of the past. (See Joseph's second letter on Baptism for the dead,

par. 18, Compendium, page 143, Acts 3: 21.)

Joseph Smith merely commenced this great work by first revealing the first principles of the gospel and the order of the priesthood, but this only in part; (First letter on Baptism for the dead, par. 18,) and many other things necessary to the work of the ministry and the gathering of the saints. But he did not reveal but a small part of that which is to come forth in this dispensation. The Book of Mormon tells us in more than a dozen places, that the "one hundredth part" of the things had and done among the Nephites, are not contained in Mormon's abridgement, and the New Testament abounds with sayings, references and allusions to things once known among the Ancient Saints, which are not, as yet, understood by the Latter Day Saints. There is very little of the Apocalypse understood. There are many sayings in Paul's writings that are anything but clearly understood; as, for instance, the change that was made in the priesthood, that, of necessity, made a change in the law.—(Heb. 7: 12.) And there are, also, several other chapters which have, to us, meaningless sayings.

Galatians 3: 19, speaks of a law that was added because of transgressions in the time of Moses, and was to remain in force till Christ. Ezekiel 20: 25, also speaks of that law, and says it "was not good," and that it was added because of transgressing laws, Sabbaths, statutes and judgments which had been previously given them in Sinai. But neither Ezekiel nor Paul tell us what that law was. The Book of Mormon also says much about that law but does not tell us clearly what it is. Revelation only can make this and the many other things, clear to the

understanding of the Saints. There is but a little of the Book of Isaiah understood, although nearly all of it refers to these last days. Questions grow out of baptism for the dead as Joseph left it; as who, or what officer in the priesthood is authorized to baptize for their dead? What are the conditions and qualifications of those who are baptized for their dead, and how far back among our ancestors are we authorized to go in being baptized for them? These are all questions of vital importance unanswered by Joseph Smith is what he has left us on this ordinance of baptism for the dead. I mention these things, and any amount more might be mentioned, to show that he merely commenced the dispensation of the fullness of times.

And now, we know that Brigham Young never revealed a single item of these lost or covered dispensations. Nor did any one of his successors; neither has any one else if it be proper to ignore Mr. Strang as Joseph Smith's lawful successor.

Now, Paul tells us that God, by means of the dispensation of the fullness of times, is going to gather all things both in heaven and in earth in one, in Christ.—(Ephes. 1:10.) And I am sure I can see no way that all things can be united in one, only by revealing all the dispensations of the past, and bringing all into subjection to them. How are the Saints of these days to be united and made one with the Saints of former times, unless by becoming acquainted with the law and the testimony and the counsels of God that governed and led them? And how can we become acquainted with and obey these things unless they are revealed to us?

When Israel entered the land of Canaan they were free and independent of all other nations. Then they

had no laws but God's laws to govern them, either in their secular or spiritual affairs. God was "their King and their law-giver." His law alone ruled them, both in peace and in war; in their incomes and in their out-goings, in their week days and on their Sabbaths, in their feasts and their mournings, in their social gatherings, and in their loneliness. There was no such distinction among them as church and state. Their church officers and state officers were all one. And, as a matter of course, this law that so ruled the people of God in those ages, must come forth in this age. I do not say that it must come forth to set aside the political law of this land, or any other land. But as God has decreed the destruction of the nations in these days, and the setting up of His Kingdom upon their ruins, it becomes a matter of the highest necessity that this law of God be first revealed, and the Saints made acquainted with it, so that when the nations of the earth are going down by the judgments of God, they may be able to establish the order of the Kingdom of God in their stead, just as it has been in the past, but to much greater perfection.

In harmony with this, God gave Mr. Strang a considerable part of this law, besides various revelations which guided him in the same work, which he commenced by Joseph Smith.

All these things speak for themselves, and show to the lover of truth that the same master mind that guided Joseph Smith, guided James J. Strang.

The Knowledge of God does not, in these days, any more than in any other, come in and take possession of men's minds without thought, reflection and careful investigation,

Let men lay by their prejudices, and honestly think, reflect and investigate, and compare spiritual things with spiritual, and we are not one whit afraid but what they will find the works of Mr. Strang as sound as the works of any other prophet, especially that commenced by the prophet, Joseph, and in exact harmony with them, too.

Before closing this letter, I must return again, for a moment, to the necessity of Joseph's successor being ordained. "We do not," says the prophet Joseph, "consider ourselves bound to receive any revelation from any one man or woman, without their being legally constituted AND ORDAINED to that authority and given sufficient proof of it" (Times and Seasons, Vol. 5, page 752.)

This, taken in connection with the saying, "shall come in at the gate and be ordained as I have told you (the church) before;" and the further fact that Moses, Jesus, Peter, James and John, and Joseph Smith; yes, and all the Holy prophets since the world began, have all been ordained to the office of prophet, seer, revelator and translator, and to all the gifts which God bestows upon the head of the church, and by heavenly messengers, too, all make a **MOUNT AND STRONG POINT AGAINST** Brigham Young. This being true of all the prophets since the days of Adam, upon what ground shall Brigham Young and his successors be exempted from its necessity?

I am not now addressing myself to the Reorganized gentlemen who teach that Joseph was a prophet, seer, revelator and translator before his ordination under the hands of Peter, James and John, who they say, did not lay their hands on Joseph and Oliver, but merely ordained them as sectarians do, by

commanding these unordained men to ordain one another, thus building up another sectarian church. But I am addressing myself to a man or men who I believe have a much better sense of the nature and importance of an ordination, that is, a genuine ordination, under the hands of those who were themselves ordained, and who, at least, hold that degree of the priesthood which they undertake to confer on others.

It is true that the first or leading officers of the Church are "first apostles," but it is very evident that in the order of apostles there are different degrees.

Joseph Smith was an apostle of the highest or first degree. His counsellors or assistants in the Presidency, are also apostles, but of secondary degree. The Twelve are next below the first and second degree, and are subject to them, and they are neither prophets, seers, revelators nor translators to the church, and are never in the law of the church, spoken of as such. Herein is the difference between Brigham Young and his quorum, and the one whom God places at the head of the church. The assistant presidents are prophets, seers and revelators, but are not allowed to write their revelations for the government of the church. Where, then, had Brigham Young the right to be a revelator to the church? Joseph alone held the keys of mysteries and revelations, and had the right, in virtue of his ordination, to stand in the presence of God, and give the word of God as from His own mouth. No other apostle in the church held any such right. "Thou," Oliver Cowdery, "shall not command him who is at thy head and at the head of the church. For I have given him (Joseph) the keys of the mysteries and the revela-

things which are sealed, until I shall appoint unto them another in his stead."—(Doc. & Cov. Sec. 28: 6, 7.) "And I have given unto him (Joseph) the keys of the mystery of those things which have been sealed, even things which were from the foundation of the world, and the things which shall come from this time until the time of my coming, if he abide in me, and if not another will I plant in his stead,"—(Sec. 35: 18.) "And this greater priesthood (that is, the priesthood which is after the holiest order of God,) holdeth the key of the mysteries of the kingdom, even the key of the Knowledge of God,"—(Sec. 84: 19.)

You perceive, then, that it is this highest and "most holy order" of the priesthood that holds the key of the mysteries of the Kingdom of God, the key of the knowledge of God. How, then, could Brigham Young or his successor, or young Joseph Smith or anybody else, come in possession of these keys without this highest and most holy order of priesthood? And how could he or any one else come in possession of this most Holy order of the priesthood, only as Joseph and Moses, and Jesus and Peter, James and John and others, all of whom obtained it only under the hands of heavenly messengers?

I will now examine Brigham Young's temple building. In the first place, they are all very fine in taste and architecture; exceedingly expensive, and so far as mere human wisdom and skill are concerned, are well worthy of any people. But the great trouble with them all is, they are great piles of cold stone, laid up by man's wisdom and not by the direction or commandment of God, in which neither God nor the angels of His presence, put in any appearance,

any more than they do in the great cathedrals of the Roman Catholic Church. I fear not to say that those Utah temples have been polluted from the laying of the very first stone to the very highest point on their towers and steeples, and that first and last they have been, and still are a STINK IN THE NOSTRILS OF GOD ALMIGHTY AND OF THE ANGELS WHO ARE HIS MINISTERS. For first of all, the Almighty God never, either called the people there; and in the second place Brigham Young was a gross usurper, who took the name of the Almighty God in vain, not having a shadow of right to the place and position he assumed over the Latter Day Saints.—(Doc. & Cov. Sec. 63: 61 to 63.)

I know very well, and I think you ought to know it, too, that every temple and tabernacle mentioned in Holy Writ, where God commanded His people, through a true prophet, to build a house unto Him according to the pattern which He gave them by revelation, that His glory and His presence was there. And the honest and pure in heart were entirely satisfied that it was so. For when Moses had reared up the tabernacle in the wilderness, "Then a cloud covered the tent of the congregation, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle,"—(Ex. 40: 34 to 38.)

And of the temple built by Solomon the pattern of which was obtained of God by revelation, we read that "when the priests were come out of the holy place, the cloud filled the house of the Lord, so that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud, for the glory of the Lord filled the house of the Lord." And in the dedicating prayer, Solomon said "If there be in the land, famine, pestilence, blasting, mildew, locust, or if there be caterpillars: whatsoever

plague, whatsoever sickness there be," &c., "then hear Thou, in Heaven Thy dwelling place, and forgive, and do, and give to every man according to his ways whose heart Thou knowest," &c.—(See 1st King, Chap. 8.)

From all that we can gather from the subject of temple building, in Holy Writ, we are assured that they are not built for the mere purpose of congregating together to hear some great man or men making great displays of human wisdom, where neither God nor the angels of His presence ever put in any appearance, and are never seen nor heard. But we do learn this:—that a temple of the Lord is a habitation of God, where honest men and women may go and petition Him upon any subject that concerns their welfare here or hereafter, and get answers to their prayers.

Behold Samuel's mother pouring out her soul's desire in the tabernacle at Shiloh, and the glorious blessing she received. Also, Rebecca went away to inquire of the Lord touching her posterity. She likely went to the temple of the Lord built in those days.—(Gen. 28: 21 to 23.)

"One thing," says David, "have I desired of the Lord, that I will seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in His temple."—(Ps. 27: 4.)

When he was troubled by the increase of the wickedly in the land, he says, in going into the sanctuary or house of God to inquire concerning them. "Then," said he, "understood I their end."—(Ps. 73: 1 to 18.)

"And inasmuch as my people build a house unto me, in the name of the Lord, and do not suffer any unclean thing to come into it, that it be not defiled, my glory shall rest upon it,

yes, and my presence shall be there, for I will come into it, and all the pure in heart that shall come into it, shall see God; but if it be defiled I will not come into it, and my glory shall not be there, for I will not come into unholly temples.—(Deut. & Cor. 3: 15 to 19.)

Again, in Sec. 34; par. 6 to 10, there is a very similar testimony. "For verily, this generation shall not all pass away, until a house be built unto the Lord, and a cloud shall rest upon it, which cloud shall be even the glory of the Lord which shall fill the house."—(Sec. 34: 5.)

So, now, if the glory of God has been, and is to be, in all those cases, where, we ask in all candor, is the glory of God in all your great Brigham Young temples and tabernacles? You see how nicely one thing harmonizes with another. The Popes know nothing of the order of the holy priesthood, and in agreement with their destitution of its ordinances and gifts, they build wonderfully fine churches and cathedrals, and call them houses of God, &c., but the Almighty, through the angels of presence, enters not these. What is the difference between them and yours? There are no mysteries of the past, present, or to come, revealed in any of the great Catholic or Protestant churches, though they cost many hundreds of millions to erect them. Is there any of the lost things of Holy Writ, or any mystery of the past, present, or to come, revealed in any of the great temples of Utah any more than in the Catholic or Protestant temples? Are there any calamities that afflicted the people or oppressions exercised over them, removed? Do insects, bugs, worms and blights prey upon the crops of Utah now as bad and even worse than before? And what bet-

ter are you off in any way, since the building and dedication of those wonderful temples, than you were before? See, now, that the ancient temples of God were all built to bring blessings of all kinds, and put away curses and calamities of all kinds; but what have you secured, or driven off?

"O, we have done wonders for our dead; many thousands have been baptized for their dead relatives, and thus we have secured their salvation," etc., say you, O fools! If the dead could speak they would cry out against your folly and vanity, and ask you what good you can do for them when you can secure no good for yourselves? How can you save us when you are not saved yourselves? When you left Nauvoo and crossed the Mississippi, to go into the wilds of the west where God never called you to go, instead of going to Voree, Wisconsin, where he did call you to go, through the prophet Joseph, you forfeited priesthood, and membership in the church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, and both you and your dead were rejected according to the decrees of God given before, in that same city, and we are satisfied from what is written that unless you speedily repent, your dead will not only curse you in days to come, but the glory and honor of raising them up will be given to others.

Therefore it is no great wonder that your leaders, once so mighty in argument, and mighty in testimony, should now fear to take up the gannet which fools and fanatics have thrown down, and have become weak as other men, as Samson of old.

"O, but have we not accomplished wonders in settling and irrigating and making homes, cities, towns

and villages in the Rocky mountains? We have translated the Book of Mormon into many languages, and we have preached to and gathered out many people from the nations of the earth and given them homes and made them acquainted with the things of God," etc.

Perhaps you have never thought that wicked men may do such things as these, and even greater by a good deal.

"Now will I point out a mystery: Many sinners shall turn and transgress against the word of uprightness. They shall speak evil things; they shall utter falsehood; EXECUTE GREAT UNDERTAKINGS, and COMPOSE BOOKS IN THEIR OWN WORDS." (Prophecy of Enoch touching the last days.) So you see that those who turn and transgress the word of uprightness, speak evil things, and utter falsehoods, CAN ACCOMPLISH GREAT UNDERTAKINGS," and write many Books. There is a class of men, also, who are going to come up before the Saviour by and by, you know, for judgment, who will plead before him that they have done a great many "wonderful works" in his name, who will be surprised to hear him say: "Verily I say unto you, you know me not; depart from me ye workers of iniquity." You will find then, friend Roberts, that God is just as good as his word; that both you and all your co-leaders with your dead are rejected, notwithstanding all your wonderful doings. You may remember also that God has said: "If they (the church) are not ORGANIZED according to my law they shall be cut off." (Doc. & Cov., Sec. 31:1, 2.)

A great deal is said about the remaining of the priesthood "in you and your lineage until the restoration of all things, etc.," but we must

not forget the other sentence following: "Therefore blessed are ye IF YE CONTINUE IN MY goodness, a light to the Gentiles, and through this priesthood a Saviour unto my people." (Moe. 86:10, 11.) Query: Were the Jews cut off for rejecting the Saviour? Did not the priesthood continue with them and their lineage? Was William E. McLellan, Oliver Cowdery, David Whitmer and fifty other prominent men in the church in this generation cut off and the priesthood taken from them? Did they inherit the right to this priesthood from their fathers? Was it taken from them for evil-doing? And, if taken from all these for evil-doing, what is to save the whole fraternity of the Salt Lake leaders from the like fate, when guilty of like crimes? "Say not we have Abraham to our father, for God is able of these stones, to raise up children unto Abraham." (Math. 3:9.)

Remember that the Kingdom of God has not yet ceased to suffer violence and that the violent have not yet ceased to take it by force. (Math. 11:12.) Remember, too, that false shepherds may possess and rule and lead the sheep of the church of God, even in these last days for a time; but the promise of God is that he will cause them to cease to ruin his flock and deliver them out of their hands. Any one who carefully reads the 24th chap. of Ezekiel may see this most satisfactorily for himself; and he will see moreover that this chapter refers wholly to these last days. God says here that he is going to require His flock at the hands of these false shepherds; and even in Joseph's day, when deception was beginning to enter into the church, God says: "Woe unto them who are sneaky, and hypocrites; for thus saith the Lord I will bring them to judg-

ment. Behold verily I say unto you there are hypocrites among you, and have deceived some, which has given the adversary power, but behold such shall be reclaimed; but the hypocrites shall be detested and shall be cut off either in life or in death, even as I will, and woe unto those who are cut off from my church for the same are overcome of the world." (Sec. 50:3 to 5.)

"Wherefore let all men beware how they take my name in their lips; for behold verily I say that many there be who are under this condemnation; who use the name of God, and use it in vain, having not authority. Wherefore let the church repent of their sins, and I the Lord will own them, otherwise they shall be cut off."—(Sec. 62:61 to 63.)

You see by this testimony how nearly the church came to be rejected as early as August, 1831, and by much that is written on this point you may all learn that God has in no way obliged himself to regard or acknowledge any people as his church, who disregard his counsels and refuse to hear the voice of his chosen prophets.

You all teach that God changes not; that such as he was in ages past such he is to-day without any doubt. Now he said in the past to the Prophet Jeremiah: "At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation and concerning a kingdom to build and to plant it, if it do evil in my sight, that it obey not my voice, then will I repent of the good, wherewith I said I would benefit them." (Jer. 18:7 to 10.) Moreover, Joseph has told the church in his day, that, "If Zion does not purify herself so as to be approved of in all things in the sight of God, he will seek himself another people, for his work will go on until Iarnel is gathered, and they who will

not hear his voice, must expect to feel his wrath."—(Times & Seasons Vol. 3: page 729.)

The spokes of a wheel do not point with any more certainty to its center than that all these things points you out as a deceived and a rejected people. You may count Brigham Young and his successor's every word of advice and counsel as so many revelations from God, and thus blaspheme and profane the character of the God of Israel, but you never can succeed in showing any one of them in possession of the keys and gifts which always belonged to the prophetic office, to which Joseph Smith and all his predecessors were called by the voice of God and ordained. You may tell us about your "Priesthood meetings," and reprove your followers for being disobedient and rebellious against the Priesthood, &c., but most earnestly we would admonish you to look well and see whether you have any priesthood, and to consider whether it would not be just as proper for you as leaders to hearken to your followers, as for them to hearken to you. For as truly as God appointed James J. Strang, through the prophet Joseph, to take his place in the leadership of the Church, so surely have the priesthood of all your leaders who have refused to hearken to that Letter of appointment, been taken from them; and so surely as you have crossed over the Mississippi out of the city of Nauvoo, under the leadership of the Twelve, to go into the wilderness under such leadership, instead of going where that letter required you to go, so surely were you all rejected with your dead, as a people; for this is the very place, and point of your rejection. And, now, if you can get beyond this into the Kingdom of God, without repentance, you

certainly will be very welcome. And just as you have not hearkened to the voice of God, but have mobbed the messengers of God out of the city of the Saints,—so God has sent men unto you who did not regard you nor your petitions, nor your pleadings, but have dragged you to prison, and robbed you by fines and penalties without mercy or feeling for either the aged or the young or the indigent among you. And the floodgates of vice and crime of every kind have been opened against you and your children to seduce and destroy them. And my opinion is that you will be punished "seven times more" and "seven times more," until the day that you repent of all these evils, or else are blotted out by the coming of the Lord Jesus. God says He will exalt His people in righteousness, and deliver them in judgments, and that He will make use of the Gentiles to chastise them and bring them to repentance. For if they will not turn from their false leaders and teachers when faithfully warned and shown their errors "the heaviest of all judgments," the Almighty says, is theirs.

We testify to all the people of Utah that God did, according to His promises to Joseph, raise up and appoint James J. Strang by revelation through Joseph, and ordained him by the hands of angels, according to the pattern, to stand in Joseph's stead to lead his people, and that at the earliest possible time afterward, that he sent his messengers to Nauvoo to inform and to warn you of it, and that the revelation of appointment also appointed Voree as a gathering place and refuge of peace from persecution, and commanded the Saints at Nauvoo and in all the world, to gather there, and obtain inheritances therein; that all were

required to stand in their proper places that the work of God might go on in its usual strength. We also testify to you that Mr. Strong was a prophet, a seer, a translator and a revelator as Joseph was; that he held the Urim and Thummim, and did translate ancient records by that instrument, as Joseph Smith did; and that he gave all men sufficient proof of these things.

We do not believe that the Church was rejected "at the death of Joseph" as Young Josephites vainly and unlawfully teach; nor do we believe that any one is authorized to so teach. But we can tell you very truly that a court assembled at Voree on the sixth day of April, eighteen hundred and forty-six, having lawful jurisdiction of the case, and did there and then at the mouths of many witnesses deliberate on the cases of your leaders, did try and condemn them as USURPERS, TEACHERS OF FALSE DOCTRINE, for TYRANNY,

for OPPRESSION and ROBBERY OF THE SAINTS, with various other charges, and that their priesthood and membership was there and then taken from them, and that they were delivered over to the buffetings of Satan until they repent and make satisfaction; and these things are all on record from that day to the present, and can be seen by all who may wish to do so. But the whole PEOPLE, as before stated, were rejected with their dead when they crossed the Mississippi out of Nauvoo, to follow Brigham Young to the western wilds; for God never called them to go there, or to follow any such man or men.

Having borne a faithful testimony to all these things, I now close my letter.

Truly and Sincerely,
WILHELM WATSON.
Spring Prairie, Wis., Nov. 13, 1894

A WORD TO GEORGE Q. CANNON.

DEAR SIR:—In your Sermon in the Deseret Weekly News of March 14, 1886, you have very coolly accused Gen. George Miller, or Bishop Miller, with criminal conduct with women, and that on that account he lost the spirit and denied the faith. Permit me to tell you, sir, that Gen. George Miller was no such man as you have pictured him. I doubt very sincerely that you have a more upright and sterling man in all your ranks, than was Gen. George Miller, not only from the day of his baptism till his death, but throughout his whole life. He was an honorable, brave and true man, every inch of him, and would scorn to be guilty of the crime you accuse him with, or any other thing mean or cowardly. Do you think that God did not know what He was about when He said:—"Let no man despise my servant George, FOR HE SHALL HONOR ME?" There is no IF nor BUT nor any other proviso here. "He shall honor me." And remember, this was given of him but a short while before Joseph's death, and the promise, therefore, that Bro. Miller was to do the Almighty, was yet in the future. He never apostatized, but he disdained to follow Brigham Young in his APOSTASY, and GROSS DEFECTION.

Gen. Miller was one of the truest friends that Joseph, the prophet, ever had. And it very ill becomes you or any other man who claims faith in Joseph, to accuse him of gross crime and misdemeanors. His house and possessions, which were large, were given freely to the poor

suffering Saints when they arrived in Quincy, Illinois, bleeding and cold and hungry and robbed and driven by the tender mercies of Missouri mob violence; and had it not been for his own means, when he was made Bishop, many of the poor would have suffered, if they had not died, from want. Joseph Smith and Hyrum, had unlimited confidence in him. Besides, his labors to build the temple, and the amount of his toils in travelling back and forward over the wilds of Wisconsin, to and from Blackriver Falls to make and bring down lumber for the Nauvoo Temple and other buildings, was simply prodigious.

It is very easy for those who have grown to ease, wealth and affluence with little toil, to stand up and accuse such men with crime and apostasy, but in the day of God's righteous judgment Gen. George Miller will be there, and I imagine that his accusers will not like to face him, and that they will greatly prefer to be somewhere else.

He became poor for the poor's sake, and wore himself out in labor and toil such as is scarcely believable by ordinary men, for the common welfare of the people.

By the way, accusing men of sexual criminal, and branding them as "apostates," has come to be a very convenient way of getting rid of those who are opposed to our proceedings, and refuse to be led by unauthorized men. But God does not let such men as Gen. George Miller slip very easily through His fingers, I can tell you.

The General followed Brigham's camp from Nauvoo to Council Bluffs, I believe, on the supposition that young Joseph Smith was appointed by his father to succeed him, a belief that Brigham Young, by cunning insinuations, created in many others as well as him, (see *Prophetic Controversy*, page 3, note 2,) but when it was proclaimed in that camp that they were about to elect a First Presidency, and Brigham began to give revelations in the name of the Lord, and undertook to lead the Church as Joseph Smith did, without either an appointment by revelation, or any ordination that authorized him to act in any such office, Gen. Miller did these and then utterly refuse to follow him further. Here is the sin of Gen. Miller's "apostasy." He never apostatized from the faith; nor did he apostatize from Brigham Young; for he could not apostatize from that which he never adhered to or received.

"When we got to winterquarters," says the General, (about the 28th of January, 1846,) "I had presented to me a revelation given through Brigham Young, in regard to the journeying of the Saints west. Young intimated to me, also, that a First Presidency would be organized. I was so greatly disgusted at the bad composition and folly of this revelation, as also the intimation that a First Presidency would be organized, that I was from this time determined to go with him no longer, and to look out a place where I might support my family, and remain until the true shepherd of God's flock should show himself, to lead the Church and Kingdom of God."

General George Miller knew mighty well that "this greater Priesthood," that is, that Priesthood which is after the holiest order of God, which

Joseph Smith held, "holdeth the key of the mysteries of the Kingdom, even the key of the Knowledge of God;" (Doc. & Cov. Sec. 84: 18-19,) and that no man can hold that order of the priesthood unless he is called and ordained to it as Joseph, himself, was. And that as Brigham Young was never either called to it or ordained to it, after that manner, he could not hold the keys that belong to it. And Mr. Cannon, knowing as you must, that Brigham Young never received an ordination to any such office, it is astounding, to me, that you or any one else, knowing the nature and virtue of a true ordination, could be found advocating the claims of Brigham Young as a prophet of God, and a successor to the prophet, Joseph Smith! Would you call a man an elder who was never ordained an elder? Would you call a man a high-priest who was never ordained to that office? Would you call any one an apostle who was never ordained to that office? You know that all those called assistant presidents of the Church in Joseph Smith's day, were all ordained to it, and will you persist in calling Brigham Young an apostle of the very highest order, such as Joseph was, without being ordained to it as he (Joseph) was? And don't you know that as you never had such an office as this among you since Joseph was taken, THAT YOU CAN HAVE NO LAWFULLY ORDAINED BISHOPS AMONG YOU? Because no bishop, unless ordained under the hands of just such a president of the Church, can be lawfully ordained?—(Doc. & Cov. Sec. 72: 20.)

Mr. Cannon, you and your co-leaders have long led the people by a false and usurped authority; but it seems to me that the time for a full exposure of your false claims has pretty clearly arrived. There are no more

Utahs to flee to, and railroads are plenty, and truth for that purpose is rich and abundant. One thing is certain, God will, sooner or later, hurl the usurpers from their high places, as one of old, to crop the grass of the field till they learn not to usurp or blaspheme His holy name and character with their unholy claims and hollow pretensions. "He that leadeth into captivity, shall go into captivity."

I could tell you a good deal more about General George Miller than you know; and of him I could freely say:—"Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his." I would covet no higher honors, nor any greater reward than that which I feel well assured will be his. There was no hypocrisy about him, nor seeking of place nor power to which he was never called; and it did not take him long to tell such men as Brigham Young just what he thought of him. "Don't attempt," said he to Mr. Young, "to put yourself upon a par with the prophet, Joseph. The contrast is as wide as between the ox and the toad."

He was not one of that class of men who could see that either "Elijah's mantle" or the prophet, "Joseph's mantle" had fallen either on the Twelve or on Brigham Young, nor had the least faith in such contemptible sectarian folly. He wanted a little more evidence than a mere dramatic gesture, before he could believe that any such "mantle" had fallen upon any such man or men. But in a time of great suffering and trial God gave him a glorious vision, in which he was shown the calling of James J. Strang, which he saw at a glance, was in direct harmony with the law providing for a successor to the prophet Joseph. And that most clearly and satisfactorily settled that question forever with him.

Now, friend Cannon, we do not think that truth is a very delicate child, or that it is at all liable to take cold by a little exposure. You may imagine that silence lends an air of dignity, sectarian-like, but God, and observing men, know that you discuss in your columns and everywhere else a thousand other questions. And why not this question of your right to lead the Church? Perhaps you will put off the honest inquirer as to why you don't like to discuss this one question, by saying as the *Lamont*, or *Josephite Herald*, that "this Strangite is seeking notoriety," and "we don't want to write them into notoriety," &c. But why don't you say the same things to all your opponents, whenever a challenge to debate any other question comes up? Why did you not put off Parson Newman in that way? Why charge your elders now to discuss this question above all others? Are you afraid that your followers will find out that you not have the truth on your side in this very important question, as well as in others? Have the Utah Mormons really got so that they like to see their elders whipped out on the most important point in their faith? Why do you all make it your business to prove your doctrine by the scriptures, but make this one very important question an exception to all the rest? Or has it got, like the Catholic Trinity and other mysteries, "too heavenly to be understood?"

Did Jesus ever say:—"I will give you a mouth and wisdom which ALL your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay or resist?" And did he ever say that:—"Every tongue that shall rise up against you in judgment, you shall have power to condemn?" and that "this is the HERITAGE of his servants?"—(Doct. & Cov. Sec. 71: 7 to 10; Isaiah 54: 17.)

"Notoriety?" O, my! Aside from the omniscience, and a desire to do good to my fellows, I sincerely doubt whether there is a man between here and Lamoni, and from there to Salt Lake City, who cares less for notoriety than your humble servant!! But

you can very easily stop his mouth, if you have the truth on your side. And now, so so, for he is not one of that class of men "who, even though vanquished, can argue still."

TRULY, W. W.

A FULL HISTORY

OF THE LETTER OF APPOINTMENT WRITTEN BY THE PROPHET, JOSEPH SMITH, TO JAMES J. STRANG, AND ITS RECEPTION AT BUR- LINGTON, WIS., AS KEPT BY THE APPOINT- ED CHURCH SCRIBE.

The following statement immediately follows the Letter of Appointment in the church record kept in Voree, from the day of its reception—July 9, 1844—down to the present time, and is sufficiently explicit as a history of that, to us, very important document.

W. W.

"1. And now it appears that this letter was on this wise:—In February in the year eighteen hundred and forty-four, James J. Strang, in company with Aaron Smith, and under his teaching, visited Nauvoo, the city of the Saints, and there, was more fully instructed by Joseph Smith, Hyrum Smith and Sidney Rigdon, in the gospel.

"2. On the twenty-fifth day of February in that year, he was baptized by Joseph Smith who gave him the gift of the Holy Ghost by the laying on of hands, and blessed him with many and great blessings, and said: 'I seal upon thy head against God's good time, the keys of the Melchizedec Priesthood;' and afterward, but in the same ordinance: 'thou shalt hold the keys of the Melchizedec Priesthood; shalt walk with Moses, Enoch and Elijah, and shalt talk with God face to face.'

"3. And on the third day of March in the same year, he was ordained an Elder in the Church of Jesus Christ of

Latter Day Saints, by the laying on of the hands of Hyrum Smith, according to the testimony and the Spirit of Prophecy, and the word of the Holy Ghost; and he said: 'I perceive by the spirit which is within me, that thou shalt carry the gospel with the spirit like flaming fire, to many nations, and by thee shall God save the pure of his people.'

"4. At this time much was said of the necessities of the Saints, for want of a suitable country for settlement, where they could avoid persecution and continual molestation, and the prophet Joseph asked counsel of James J. Strang, who was greatly learned in geography, in regard to many countries, especially California, New Mexico and Oregon, and he advised an exploration of those countries for determining what facilities they offered for settlement, and gave much information in regard to them, both for the guidance of the explorers and to determine what parts were worth exploration.

"5. He also advised a settlement of the Saints to be formed immediately on White River in Wisconsin, to consist of mechanics and artisans from the Northern and Eastern states, and Purveyors of America, and from Europe, because the climate of Nauvoo is unfavorable to the health of such, and the place does not furnish

business wherewith to employ them, both which difficulties would be entirely obviated by such an arrangement, and many other advantages would be gained in peaceable, law-abiding neighbors, cheapness of access and facilities for building.

"6. The exploration of the Nebraska country, New Mexico and upper California was immediately determined on, and arrangements commenced for sending out twenty-five explorers during the following summer.

"7. It was enjoined upon James J. Strang by Joseph Smith, Hyrum Smith and Sidney Rigdon, to return to Wisconsin and make more full examinations of the country with direct reference to the advantages it might offer to the Saints, and to write to Joseph the results of that examination, after which he would determine by the best light that God would give him, what ought to be done.

"8. Aaron Smith concurred with James J. Strang in recommending a gathering in Wisconsin, and counselled the selection of the country on White River as the place for planting a Stake of Zion; and it was agreed by all that the thing should be looked upon with favor and prosecuted with vigor to a final result.

"9. On the 24th day of May, 1844, James J. Strang having completed his examinations and inquiries, wrote the result in a letter to Joseph Smith, to which Aaron Smith a few days after added a note concurring therein, and attesting the facts therein stated.

"10. The letter contained a minute statement of the advantages for the settlement of the Saints, which the southeastern section of Wisconsin offered, more especially for the building of a town on White River, immediately west of Burlington. It

was put in the post-office at Burlington, directed to Joseph Smith of Nauvoo, ABOUT THE LAST OF MAY BY AARON SMITH.

"11. Moreover the preceding letter (of appointment.—W. W.) is in answer thereto, and was mailed at Nauvoo, on the 19th day of June, which plainly appears by the post-mark thereon, and directed to James J. Strang at Burlington in Wisconsin, at which place it arrived by mail at the time before stated, and was taken from the post-office on the same day by Caleb P. Barnes, an attorney at law, and by him delivered to James J. Strang IN THE PRESENCE OF AARON SMITH, WHO IMMEDIATELY SAT DOWN TOGETHER AND OPENED AND READ THE LETTER."

Mr Blair, at the East Jordan debate, spoke with an air of great assurance, against the idea of Mr. Strang giving Joseph Smith counsel in relation to desirable territory for the location of the Saints, as follows:—"We deny," says Mr Blair, "that Joseph Smith asked counsel of Mr. Strang where to locate the Church. It was unreasonable. Mr. Strang had just come into the church; and besides that, Joseph then had his lawful counsellors. There were also many learned men in the church who were fully competent to give counsel if needed." But we answer, as stated in this document, that Joseph and his two highest counsellors enjoined the matter of further looking up the nature and resources of this land, and James and Aaron Smith faithfully did as required. And now, we ask in all candor, honesty and sincerity, what there is about all this that proves Mr. Strang a dishonest or evil-designing man? It is amazingly strange, supposing as Mr Blair says, that Joseph Smith had his lawful counsellors, that he was so bound

head and foot that he could not ask a question or make a little inquiry of an intelligent man, in relation to certain regions of country which he supposed Mr. Strang might know, and of which neither he nor his counselors did know or could know of themselves.

It will be seen farther, from the above history, that Mr. Strang was not alone in the counsel. Aaron Smith who was well acquainted with Mr. Strang, and who was a High Priest in the region of Burlington, Wis., under whose preaching Mr. Strang was partially converted to the faith, and who accompanied Mr. Strang to Nauvoo, it seems was present at this counsel, and heard Mr. Strang's advice, and confirmed what he said in relation to the land on White River, Wis. Moreover, when Mr. Strang had completed his investigations, and was about to send his account to Joseph Smith, this Aaron Smith added a note to this account, confirming what Mr. Strang had just written; and this same Aaron Smith is the very man that put Mr. Strang's letter to Joseph Smith, containing his own confirmatory note, into the post-office at Burlington, and was also present when C. P. Barnes presented the letter written by Joseph to Mr. Strang in answer, as stated in the Diamond page 5, par. 3; and these three men sat now together, while Mr. Strang read the letter.

Where is the chance for forgery here? If all this amounts to forgery, in the name of truth, what letter that has ever been received by any man since the world began can be proved genuine?

Now, there is another thing that is of much importance touching this letter. If this letter had been one of the more modern letters, enclosed in

an envelope, and sent to Mr. Strang, it might be an easy matter for the enemy to say that the letter was forged, and slipped into an envelope that had recently been received from Nauvoo on other business with the Nauvoo post-mark on it. But that is a thing which all are most effectually barred against doing. For the letter of Joseph Smith containing Mr. Strang's appointment, is one of the old-fashioned style, common in those days, and still later, where the last page of the sheet was left blank for the purpose of receiving the address after being folded; the edges then being inserted into each other were joined together by either a water or a little heated sealing wax. Such were the letters of those times, and such was and is the letter of appointment. It is still in existence and may be examined by any one curious enough to investigate its claims; and it has the Nauvoo post-mark; as all the letters from Nauvoo, at that time have, and is stamped with red ink, giving the lie very forcibly to all those who said it was black. And to those who have reported that the letters in the mailing stamp of this letter "were one size larger than those in the mailing stamp at Nauvoo," Mr. Strang's answer is still,—"measure it; it has been measured a thousand times already, and no one has detected a difference." And, again, to those who say that it is not in the hand-writing of Joseph Smith, I answer that it is not in the common hand-writing of any man, but is written in a very plain way in ITALICS; and was, I presume, so written in order that there should be no doubt or uncertainty created by either word or letter therein.

But Mr. Blair essays to attack the genuineness of this letter on other grounds. It was altogether too long

in coming, he says: "I am somewhat acquainted with the way the mail was carried in those days, and I know," says he, "that it would not take more than THREE days for a letter to go from Nauvoo to Burlington; but this letter was TWENTY DAYS reaching its destination. Does not this look suspicious?"—(Watson-Blair Debate, page 54.)

"I'd rather not know quite so much," says Josh Billings, "than to know so much that ain't so." Now, Mr. Blair, do you know that there was a regular daily mail between Nauvoo and Burlington, Wis., taking Chicago in its route at that time? A horse that would go over one-third that route, which must be at least 250 miles, in one day, with a man and mail-bag on his back, would be a very valuable animal. I do positively know, by actual experience, myself, of instances where it has taken fully three weeks for letters to come 40 miles, and where there was a daily stage more than half the way. Such things are not at all uncommon on many routes. But the sending of that letter is now nearly fifty years since, and at a time, too, when stage lines and daily mails were exceedingly limited. So I think Mr. Blair knows a great deal that "ain't so."

But Mr. Blair thinks it was a very risky way to send so important a document as the Letter of Appointment through the mails. I can't help but think however, that it was quite as safe as any other way, especially when I remember that Willard Richards published it far and near at that time, that there were sealed documents left in his hands, that could not be opened until the return of the Twelve Apostles to Nauvoo, that would show who was appointed to succeed Joseph, but which were never opened to the public nor referred to

after they did get home, (see Diamond, page 5.) We imagine, also, that God and His prophet knew a little better than Mr. Blair, how His appointments ought to be conveyed. The most important documents of all nations have been carried in the mails, and are to-day.

But again Mr. Blair criticizes. The language used in that letter, he says, is not Joseph Smith's language; and he gives us a sample of Joseph Smith's language when rebuking corrupt and wicked men, and deriding their political and hypocritical inconsistencies, as John C. Calhoun and Henry Clay.

Mr. Blair would have us to believe that Joseph, the seer, had but one style or mood of expression, no matter whether he were reproving and scoring political hypocrites or contemplating the most glorious and sublime things of the heavens.

Just read paragraph 23, of Joseph's second letter on baptism for the dead, and then read his advice on "writing letters," his instruction upon "Common Schools," "Friendly Hint to Missouri," "Views of the Government and Policy of the United States," and then read the facts or matters of history he has given us in "History of Joseph Smith," and then tell men of common sense that there is no difference in the mood, tone, style and spirit of all these; and if you do I should think that they could as easily believe that there was no difference between an oak and a pine, a spruce and a cedar, a cherry tree and an apple tree, &c. And yet the revelations which God gave him, are so different from his own mode of expression as to be altogether unlike. A child could very easily distinguish them one from the other by hearing alone.

The Letter of Appointment, so far as Joseph's own words to James are concerned, are very much like many things written by him, in tone and composition, but the revelation appointing James differs only in the subject, or object of it, from those in the Book of Doctrine & Covenants—the style is the same.

I confess that I do not like to follow up Mr. Blair in his quibblings, and his very learned (?) distinctions where there is no difference. But I do like to advocate the truth, and must, therefore, follow him a while longer in his remarks touching this letter.

Joseph says in this letter:—"In the midst of darkness and boding (surrounding) danger, the spirit of Elijah came upon me, and I went away to inquire of the Lord how the church should be saved." And right here I will boldly say that if it was not necessary then to inquire of the Lord how the church should be saved from the perils she was then in, and that were threatening daily on every hand, never, since the world began, has anything of that kind been necessary. Here is Joseph and Hyrum about to be taken from them; a howling mob stands ready and eager to destroy, to murder and rob and exile, and here—worst of all—stand a number of men ready to start up to deceive, mislead and blind the people with false doctrine and delusion; a most horrible and dreadful time it was, indeed! "Great calamities" were then impending, and if the word of God was not then necessary to warn the people, and guide them safely through all this, it is vain to say that revelation for any such object was ever needed under any circumstances, and yet the revelation contained in the Letter of Appointment was the only one given through

Joseph, the only lawful revelator to the church, as a guide and a warning from the threatening ruin. But in Joseph's going away to inquire of God "how the church should be saved," he says—"I was upon the Hill of the temple. The calm father of waters (the Mississippi) rolled hallow, CHANOCKLESS and eternal. I beheld a light in the heavens above, and streams of bright light illuminated the firmament, varied and beautiful as the rainbow, gentle, yet rapid as the fierce lightning. The Almighty came from His throne of rest. He clothed Himself with light as with a garment. He appeared, and moon and stars went out."—(see Diamond, pages 3 and 4.)

Here Mr. Blair arises as one who has made a wonderful discovery, and says:—"It is absurd to claim that inspiration would say that the Mississippi was changeless. Why, there are times when it wholly overflows its banks. In a single night its conditions are entirely changed."

Surprising discovery, Mr. Blair! But what little school-boy does not know all that?

Mr. Blair is evidently one of that class of men who have undertaken to convict the prophets of God, but succeed only in exposing their own ignorance and folly, and are put to shame.

The reader will bear in mind that this language is merely the descriptive language employed by the prophet Joseph in giving an account of a glorious vision which he claims to have had in behalf of the church. The revelation given by the God of heaven on this occasion, is another and different thing. Joseph might, possibly use erroneous phraseology in his descriptive account of this or any other vision or communication. But neither Joseph nor any other

prophet, ever fails to make himself clearly understood to those who properly examine their testimonies. He might say, "He (God) appeared, and moon and stars went out." And quibbling and unreasonable men like Mr. Blair, might ask, "where did they go to?" We might answer by asking where they go to when the sun dies? They disappear from human eyesight, that is where they "go to." The sun's light being so much more powerful and glorious, blots out, or swallows up, the weaker light of moon and stars. Just so in this glorious vision. But, Mr. Blair asks again:—"who kept house" when the Almighty came from His throne of rest? What a question for a man claiming to be a minister of God, to ask! A more profane or ignorant question could not be asked by the roughest boy that runs the streets. If we were as profoundly curious we might ask, who kept house on the numerous occasions when He came down and talked with Moses, with Elijah, with Isaiah and with many other prophets in the past?

At first sight it would seem ridiculous to say that the Mississippi was "changeless." God, Himself, is said to be unchangeable, and so He is; yet there are long periods in His life when He is well pleased with His people, and again there are long periods when His anger against them burned and smoked against them "to the lowest hell." His whole character towards men in the past, has been a succession of changes from pleasure to anger, wrath, jealousy and hot displeasure, and yet it is said He never changes. Full of changes towards men, and yet never changed! How is this? The answer is that He is ever pleased in any and in all ages of the past, with men when they do right, and is ever dis-

pleased with them when they do wrong. And to be thus pleased, or displeased with righteousness or unrighteousness, is one of His unchanging characteristics. So with the Mississippi; it is one of its great characteristics, to rise and fall in the volume of its waters, but taken decade by decade, and century by century, and one thousand years by another, it changes not in these characteristics. In its changeability it is unchangeable. There are a good many other things that are full of changes but still never change. The wicked are said to be without changes yet their whole lives are full of changes.—(Ps. 55: 19.) In their general character they change not, though they may change from good nature or good humor, to anger and wrath several times a day. Just so with various animals, wild and domestic. The earth, the moon and many planets, are constantly changing, yet never change from their general character. Thus far upon the unchangeable father of waters.

But, "the earth dissolved in space," says Joseph. And says Mr. Blair: "Now, is it true that on the 18th of June, 1844, the earth dissolved in space?"

Thus Mr. Blair seems to take pleas-ure in exposing his own ignorance, in the attempt to convict and expose the prophet. Mr. Blair ought to know by this time, that the earth and all its elements are EXCEEDINGLY SENSATIVE AT, OR IN THE PRESENCE OF GOD, or the angels of His presence. The prophets of God, ancient and modern, have given us numerous instances of this; and I believe the prophets of God understood these things any amount better than the philosophers of the present day, the best of them.

Joseph Smith, by revelation from

God, says:—"Verily, I say unto you, that ALL things unto me (God) are spiritual," &c. That is, all things in the presence of God partake of the nature of Spirit, intelligence, motive and will.—(Doc. & Cov. Sec. 28: 9.) And again we read that God hath "given a law unto ALL things, by which they move in their times and in their seasons."—(Sec. 85: 11.) If all things have a law given unto them, that implies that all things have a power to obey law; and if they have power to obey law, they must have sufficient light and knowledge, motive and will, to enable them to work correctly by that law; and this is the view that all the prophets and all the heavenly host have given us of them, from the beginning. —

I quote now from the 77th Psalm. 16-18. "The waters saw Thee, O, God, the waters saw Thee; they were AFRAID; the depths also were TROUBLED."

And now, from Habhakuk. Chap. 3: 9-10.—"Thy bow was made quite naked according to the oaths of the tribes. Thou didst clean the earth with rivers. The MOUNTAINS saw thee and they TREMBLED; the deep UTTERED HIS VOICE, and lifted up his hands on high," &c. This is what the prophet Habhakuk saw would take place in the latter days, when God comes down to deliver His people.

Speaking of the same or similar things, Isaiah says:—"When thou didst terrible things which we looked not for, thou camest down, the mountains flowed down AT THY PRESENCE."—(Is. 64: 3.)

"O, God, when Thou wentest forth before thy people, when Thou didst march through the wilderness, the earth shook, the HEAVENS MOVED at the presence of God; even Sinai itself, was moved at the presence of

God, the God of Israel."—(Ps. 68: 7-8.) "When Israel went out of Egypt, the house of Jacob from a people of strange language, * * * the SEA saw it and FLED; Jordan was driven back. The mountains SKIPPED LIKE RAMS, and the little hills LIKE LAMBS. What ailed thee, O, thou sea, that thou fleddest? Ye mountains that ye skipped like rams, and ye little hills like lambs? Tremble thou earth, AT THE PRESENCE OF THE LORD; at the presence of the God of Jacob."—(Ps. 114.)

"And Mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, BECAUSE THE LORD DESCENDED UPON IT IN FIRE; and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly."

If I wished to quibble and trifle with holy things, I might ask if "the heavens dropped" where did they DROP to? If Sinai was moved at the presence of God, where did it move to? If the hills and mountains skipped like rams and lambs, where did they skip to? And when the heavens opened, as Stephen and others have told us, why did they not stay open? &c.

With all these things written before us for our learning, and much more of like character, Mr. Blair is seemingly astonished at the saying, "the earth" immediately in the vicinity of where the prophet Joseph stood and talked with God, "dissolved in space," &c., and feels only to ridicule such sayings as "extravagant," unreasonable and untrue. O, my, I could introduce here a good deal more of this "extravagant" language, and I can't help but think that if the following language from the pen of Joseph Smith, were only found in Mr. Strang's appointment, Mr. Blair would ridicule it as "extravagant," with a vengeance.

"Let the earth break forth into singing, * * * let the mountains shout for joy; and all ye valleys cry aloud; and all ye seas and dry lands TELL the wonders of your eternal King. And ye rivers and brooks, and hills flow down with gladness. Let the woods and all the TREES of the field PRAISE the Lord; and ye solid rocks WEEP FOR JOY. And let the sun, moon and morning stars SING TOGETHER, and let all the sons of God shout for joy. And let the eternal creations declare His name for ever and ever."—(2nd Letter on Baptism for the Dead.)

According to Mr. Blair, Joseph Smith never wrote this most beautiful paragraph, BECAUSE IT IS ALTOGETHER UNLIKE HIS REDUKE OF HENRY CLAY AND JOHN C. CALHOUN! And right here I feel to say, as Joseph said when reproving other political hypocrites—"O, Granny, what a long tail our puss has got!" What a wonderful discernment Mr. Blair has of the prophet's moods, "style and composition!"

Modern notions touching the earth, the planets and their elements, would lead us to conclude that the above language is very lofty, sublime, and grandly poetic, to be sure, but very hard to believe possible; but Joseph and all other prophets, knew very well what they were doing in using such language as this. Nothing at all impossible about it; nor is it in the least unreasonable or "extravagant."

"I tell you," said Jesus, when the Pharisees would rebuke the multitude because they shouted his praise, "if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out."

"Then he arose and smothered the winds and the sea, and there was a great calm." And they then said, "What manner of man is this, that

even the WINDS and the SEA OBEY him?"—(Luke 8: 24, 25, 19, 33, 40.)

I can hardly disavow this particular point without introducing a little of the "extravagance" of both Ezekiel and the God who sent him.

"Thus saith the Lord God to the mountains, to the hills, to the rivers and to the valleys, to the desolate wastes, and to the cities that are forsaken," &c. * * * "Ye, O, MOUNTAINS of Israel, shall shoot forth your branches, and yield your fruit to my people Israel; for they are at hand to come,"—that is, from all the nations of the earth,—“For behold, I am for you, and I will turn unto you, and ye shall be tilled and sown. And I will multiply men upon you, all the house of Israel, even all of it, and the cities shall be inhabited, and the wastes shall be builded, and I will multiply upon you man and beast, and I will settle you after your old estates; and I will do better unto you than at your beginning, and YE SHALL KNOW that I am the Lord. Yea, I will cause men to walk upon you, and they shall possess thee, and thou shalt be their inheritance, and thou shalt henceforth bereave them of men no more.”—(Ezek. 36th Chap.)

"Extravagant" language? What kind of language is the above, addressed to hills, mountains, rivers, valleys, desolate cities and waste places? 'Things like this are crowding upon me, but I have not space for but little more. Moses said "the Bush burned but the bush was not consumed."—(Exod. 3: 2.) What! Anything burn and not be consumed? What if a remark like this had been made in the letter of appointment?

Isaiah says that while he was in the temple of God, that the God of Israel appeared there, and that the posts of the door MOVED at His presence. O, that would be impossible

without bursting the stone-work of the temple. Who can believe an "extravagant" thing like this? O, but that is not it all, either; for on this occasion the prophet was sad that he was a man of unclean lips, and he says one of the seraphim flew and took a live coal from the altar and laid it upon his lips and told him that that had removed his uncleanness of lips. O, surely, if a thing of that kind were done it would have burned his mouth; and besides, how would a live coal remove a man's iniquity or uncleanness of lips? Great "extravagance" here again, you see! —(Exod. 3: 2; Isa. 6: 1-7.)

To use Mr. Blair's beautiful phraseology, touching the Letter of Ap-

pointment,—"All these false and extravagant sayings, should brand that vagabond" Book, the Bude, and that other vagabond book, the Doctrine & Covenants, as frauds and forgeries.—(See Mr. Blair's remarks on page 21 of Watson-Blair debate on the letter of appointment.)

I notice that Mr. Blair can argue very well when pretty thoroughly whipped. He seems to act on the principle that what he lacks in logic, has to be made up in chaff and cheek. It is nothing for him to refute the prophets of God, and the Almighty, Himself. Indeed, it often happens that he refutes Mr. Blair!





AN OPEN LETTER

—(TO):—

B. H. ROBERTS, *Also*
SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH.

*See
Pages 18422
Individual*

Mr. B. H. Roberts,

Dear Sir:—I have read your book on "Succession in The Presidency of The Church," and I have read it carefully, and find that you are a good reasoner and logician when you have sound premises to reason from; but unfortunately you are not always in possession of such premises, and therefore, while your reasoning faculties are good, many of your conclusions are simply faulty and false. I say so with no ill-feeling to you or to any. I have written, lately, a little work on this question, myself, but have not yet got it into print, and I find that what you have said in relation to young Joseph's false claims to the prophetic office, and what I have said, myself, on that matter, run very nearly together; and I feel that any man who reflects at all upon those claims, must come to similar conclusions.

Young Joseph Smith's claims are simply false, and no amount of effort can make them true; and nothing but the merest ignorance or effrontery, with a determination to succeed at any cost, could ever prompt any man who looks the written facts squarely in the face, to stand up in its defence. These bourgeoised gentlemen are not ignorant of the weakness of their position. Their bread and butter, however, are at stake, and feeling that they have a good thing, on the surface, though false and rotten underneath, they do not at all feel like giving it up, or acknowledging their errors. But I often think it strange that Brighamites, men who are so

confident of having the truth on their side, should utterly refuse to take up the gauntlet thrown down by these same Josephites, especially as they are commanded to "call upon their enemies to meet them both in private and in public," and to invite them to bring forth their strong reasons against the Lord and His work, and are promised that in as much as they are faithful, the folly of their enemies shall be made manifest. I can't imagine how that utter refusal can be justifiable on Brigham's part, or on the part of anyone claiming the right to lead a people such as the Latter Day Saints, especially where so much self-evident folly crops out on the part of the enemy as is found in support of the claims of young Joseph to succeed his father in the prophetic office. A consciousness of the weakness of the position assumed both by Brigham and his successors, can alone account for it.

But I propose now, to point out a few things which concern Brigham's history and claims, which I am not able to find any reference made to in your book on "Succession in the Presidency of the Church."

"He that is ordained of me (to fill the President's office) shall come in at the gate, and be ordained as I have told you heretofore."

You perceive that this language refers to the highest officer in the church, and can refer to no other officer. And now, what did God tell us "heretofore" in relation to the ordination of that officer? "I have sent unto you (Joseph) Peter, James and John (angels) by whom I have or-